GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1848
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2016
Recovery of Stolen Bronze Statue
Senguttuvan Shri Balasubramaniam

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware of the reports that a stolen bronze statue of the Tamil Saivite saint, Manickavasagar has been seized by the US customs if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the said idol is still in the custody of US authorities; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to bring it back to India ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE, CULTURE AND TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) Yes, Madam. The bronze statue of Tamil Saivite Saint Manikavasagar was stolen from Prahathaeeshwasar Temple, Sripuranthan village prior to 2008. The image was seized by the Department of Home Land Security, USA.

(b) to (c) The statue was examined by the teams of Archaeologists from Archaeological Survey of India during their visit to New York from 2nd -6th June, 2016 and found it as genuine antiquity of Indian origin. The statue was handed over by the Department of Home Land Security, US to Hon'ble Prime Minister of India during his visit to US on 7.8.2016. Being a case property it has been handed over to Idol Wing of Tamil Nadu Police on 30.8.2016 to produce the same before the Court as requested by them.